

Title: DEPARTMENTAL AUTHORITY		Contents: A-0300
		Submitted By: Purchasing Division
		Approved By: Purchasing Agent
Effective Date: 12-10-01	Supersedes No.:	Page No. 1 of 1

General

Acquisition of personal property are made by the Purchasing Agent pursuant to:

- California Government Code 25501, et seq.;
- County Code, Title 2, Chapter 2.81; and
- Section 24 of the County Charter.

Delegation of Purchasing Authority to Departments

The Purchasing Agent has the authority to delegate certain types and dollar values of procurements to individual County departments when it is determined to be more efficient, cost effective and in the best interest of the County. This delegation requires the respective department to comply with established Purchasing policies and procedures, and to meet other standards established for training and accountability as prescribed by the Purchasing Agent, as well as internal certification and control standards established by the Auditor-Controller. The level of authority delegated by the Purchasing Agent varies depending on whether the goods or services are considered to be "Agreement" or "Non-Agreement" purchases.

Agreement Purchases

The Purchasing Agent establishes agreements with a wide variety of vendors for commonly purchased supplies and equipment. County departments are delegated the authority to make purchases against these agreement since prices, terms and conditions related to the purchases to be made have already been established by the Purchasing Agent.

In most cases, departments are not limited as to the amount they may purchase against an agreement (i.e., since the prices have already been established). However, in all cases, they must ensure that any purchases made are within their budgetary authority.

Non-Agreement Purchases

"Non-Agreement" purchases reflect instances where there is no pre-existing agreement with a vendor or a group of vendors for a specific service or commodity. In these cases, a vendor is selected on a purchase-by-purchase basis.

Subject to compliance with County purchasing and internal standards, the Purchasing Agent has established two levels of delegated authority for County departments to make non-agreement purchases for equipment, supplies and services.

Level One - \$5,000

County departments have the delegated authority to purchase non-agreement goods or services up to \$5000, without the direct involvement of the Purchasing Agent. They are responsible for ensuring their procurement practices (e.g., price quotes, etc.) comply with County purchasing requirements.

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Level Two - \$15,000

On August 31, 1998, the Purchasing Agent established a Board approved, Increased Delegated Purchasing Authority program in conjunction with recommendations made by the California State Auditor. This increases the delegated authority for participating departments from \$5,000 to \$15,000 for non-agreement purchases. Departments must request to participate in the program, and must certify adherence to, and strict compliance with purchasing policies and procedural requirements. In addition to certification, the Purchasing Agent verifies compliance with Internal Control Plans with the Auditor-Controller, before approving a department to participate in the program.

Exception

Sole source and other than low bid purchases over \$5,000, which are reported to the Board by the Purchasing Agent, on a monthly basis, are not delegated to departments regardless of delegated authority.